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ABSTRACT

Findings of a study that identified critical skills for the novice principal are presented in this paper. Two theoretical frameworks are used to view the issue of principal effectiveness--a taxonomy of necessary skills and socialization. Surveys of 1,125 novice principals and 435 superintendents in California produced 450 and 208 responses, respectively. Findings indicate a strong agreement among and between principals and superintendents regarding the skills that new principals need. Both groups said that conceptual, self-awareness, and people skills were more important than knowledge of technical skills. Both principals and superintendents identified the new principal's greatest challenges as creative fiscal management and working with a variety of interest groups. Universities must therefore develop administrator preparation programs that reflect the emerging paradigm shift in the form of full-time, intensively socializing, and academic training programs. Five tables and four figures are included. Appendices contain copies of the two questionnaires, statistical data, and the Daresh taxonomy of skills. (Contains 27 references.) (LMI)

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KEYS TO SUCCESS: CRITICAL SKILLS FOR THE NOVICE PRINCIPAL

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Keys to Success:
Critical Skills for the Novice Principal

Introduction:

Much has been written about the importance of the school principal—a job which can move from chief custodian to instructional leader within half-an-hour on a "good" day. Even though the principal has been identified as a key player in the educational framework of the district, no clear set of defined skills have been developed to provide guidance to the beginning principal. Acknowledging the belief that effective administration of schools is part science and part artistry or craft, (Blumberg, 1989) an awareness of specific key skills, competencies or mindsets could serve as a blueprint to help the novice principal understand what is important to successful accomplishment of the job.

Persons actively engaged in the role of the principal are a key source of knowledge regarding its challenges and demands. By asking them to reflect upon what they believe to be the critical skills necessary to effectively lead school communities in the '90s, we can begin to better understand the complexities of the role of the principal. For those aspiring to the role or undertaking their first principalship, having this knowledge-base may help them succeed.

From that perspective there were three purposes for performing this research:

1. **To identify critical skills needed by the novice principal based on validation and perceptions of other principals.**

2. **To suggest areas for professional development which may be self-selected by the novice to speed his/her progress through the socialization process.**

3. **To make suggestions which might be incorporated into the pre-service preparation for principals which match more precisely the actual needs of the position.**

Theoretical Frameworks

This study looked through two theoretical frameworks to view the issue of principal effectiveness. The first theoretical framework was that of a **taxonomy of skills** necessary for effective management of people. There had been some attempts to pinpoint skills necessary to principal effectiveness. The National Association for Secondary School Principals' (NASSP) Assessment Center Project had selected twelve skills which they felt were important for principal productiveness. Other authors had provided categorizations which divided skills in taxonomies. For example,

Sergiovanni (1987) suggested that skills which principals brought to bear on situations may have been divided into cultural, symbolic, educational, human and technical. The work of Daresh and Playko (1989) on critical skills for new principals identified three categories of skills that superintendents believed to be critical for new principals to possess: technical skills ("how do you...?"); self-awareness skills ("why do I...?") and socialization skills ("what do we do...?").

However the most accepted taxonomy of managerial skills was one proposed by Katz (1955) and expanded by later works of Kahn which identified conceptual, human and technical categories. Katz believed that as one moved up the business hierarchy, the importance of conceptual skills increased. Furthermore, technical skills were most important for beginning level leaders. (In education a beginning level position would probably be assistant principal or teacher on special administrative assignment). Katz felt that human skills were important throughout the organization but less important for higher level executives who may not have had the interaction that lower level personnel had.

Later studies of Ludeman (1989) and Rice (1987) have disagreed with Katz's conclusions. Many of these studies found that human skills were much more important than technical skills to a successful manager. Furthermore, that application of Katz's theories to an enterprise as personal and service-oriented as the educational system may have been questioned.

In light of reform efforts in the past decade of education—notably the decentralization of decision making to teachers and principals at the school site— there was a dearth of knowledge regarding perceptions of teachers, superintendents and principals as to the critical skills necessary for the principal.

One interesting study by Kowalski et al. (1992) related to differences in individual principal skill by teachers and principals. When principal assessments for individual skills were compared with teachers, particular skills showed statistically significant differences at the .05 level. Teachers rated a principal's ability to empathize with others (human skill-Katz Taxonomy) as much more valuable than did principals. Principals rated evaluating programs, teaching performance and engaging in clinical supervision much more important than teachers.

Socialization

The second theoretical framework was that of **socialization.** Merton (1968) defined socialization as the processes an individual acquires including dispositions, skills, and awareness needed to perform a social role effectively. Over time, one becomes a member of a profession through a process called "professional socialization."

Studies have been done of the socialization of new administrators. Duke, Isacson, Sagor and Schmuck (1984) reported that socialization experiences by novice administrators are usually informal, tense and short rather than designed. They found that feelings of a lack of skills, loneliness and time constraints accounted for a tough first year or years for the novice. Alvy (1984) found that new administrators needed to adjust to alienation from the faculty and develop flexibility in regard to the opinions of others and have a wider perspective of pressing issues.

Based upon socialization literature Parkay, et al. (1992) developed a professional socialization hierarchy for beginning principals which involve five stages. These five stages include: survival, control, stability, educational leadership and professional actualization. The authors, after utilizing a case study approach, felt that principals enter the position at different stages of the hierarchy. The "handwriting was on the wall" for each principal after the first year regarding their eventual level of effectiveness. This literature had high relevancy for this study as it suggested that the quicker the novice moved through various stages, the higher and longer his or her level of effectiveness would be. The sooner they developed confidence and a more realistic view of what would be accomplished, the quicker they would reach their full effectiveness. The work done by Van Maanen (1977) also indicated that beginning principals should be aware of the stages of their career and the ups and downs of leadership.

Background

Two major issues have emerged within the past several years when we consider the critical skills necessary for principals: **1) Pressure from the public to reform and restructure education** and **2) The quality of current principal training.** Both of these issues are the most important concerns to emerge in recent years and how both issues are resolved will sculpt the image of 21st century education.

Why were these two issues of vital importance? The first issue, the restructuring of public education, was important because this reformation of schools will change the way schools are configured at the local level. Since the release of the report, ***A Nation At Risk***, public education has received pressure from the public, as well as state legislatures, to reform or restructure schools. Systemic reform is complex and especially difficult to bring about in the conservative school system, (Seneschal, 1990, Fullan and Miles, 1992).

Most schools have reacted to this pressure to change and have implemented some type of reform or restructuring. To provide further impetus for restructuring, the State of California requires site councils of all schools that receive categorical funding. Moreover, the State Department of Education has set aside additional funds for

schools that are involved in a restructuring process. Empowerment of teachers and parents at the school site level is already changing the role of the principal. In the light of restructuring, what were the significant challenges that new principals now face? What effect will this change have on the leadership role of the principal?

The second issue, quality of principal training had also received attention from numerous books and articles. Since the traditional role of the principal will change under restructuring, there was an additional emphasis on the training of principals by universities. It becomes critical that universities remain current in their understanding of the realities and demands of the principalship. The emphasis on national testing standards will provide an additional impetus to examine the caliber of training of principals at the university level.

Universities need to take a leadership role in determining the most important skills needed by beginning principals in order for them to be successful during these fluctuating times. How do new principals perceive the adequacy of their pre-service program in preparing them to meet the new challenges?

Past research on critical skills for school site managers have followed the pattern of asking superintendents and novice principals to identify critical skills. Emerging at the "top of the list" are good communication skills, openness to divergent viewpoints and talking to key school site players while showing no favoritism (Daresh, 1987). Also specific job roles have been identified for effective principals including: visionary roles, facilitator roles, evaluator roles and improver roles (Poston, 1992).

For five years a team of researchers at the University of Texas at Austin has been studying the leadership skills of elementary and secondary principals. Five essential qualities of effective principals emerged: 1) have clear, informed visions of what they want for their schools to become—visions that focus on students and their needs; 2) translate these visions into goals for their schools and expectations for teachers, students and administrators; 3) establish school climates that support progress toward these goals and expectations; 4) continuously monitor progress; and 5) intervene in a supportive or corrective manner when this seems necessary (Rutherford, 1985).

Problem

The questions addressed in this study address the search for critical skills needed by novice principals in these turbulent times. The problem centered on perceived critical skills needed by novice principals to be successful. In order to address these issues, questionnaires were mailed to a random sample of superintendents and principals in order to determine how much congruence exists between the perception of principals and superintendents regarding critical skills for beginning principals. The research questions addressed in the study were:

1. **What skills do principals identify as being critical to their success during the first year of principalship?**

2. **What skills do superintendents identify as critical for the beginning principal?**

3. **What is the attitude of principals and superintendents toward their administrative certificates program?**

4. **What do superintendents believe to be the greatest challenges for new principals?**

To expand the information in the study, comparative biographical data as well as demographic information about the principals and superintendents as well as their attitudes toward administrative training program was collected.

Research Design and Format

This research employed survey methodology to gather data from superintendents and principals regarding their perceptions of critical skills needed by beginning principals to be effective in their role. Additional data was gathered regarding their perceptions of the adequacy of educational administration certification programs in preparing persons to assume a principalship.

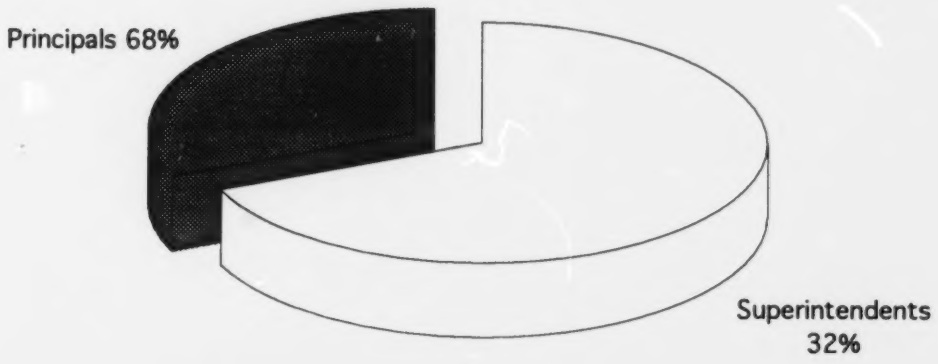
Population and Sample

The population of respondents included in this study consisted of 450 principals in the state of California, 208 California superintendents *(see Figure 1)*.

Figure 1. Questionnaire Respondent Sample

N=658

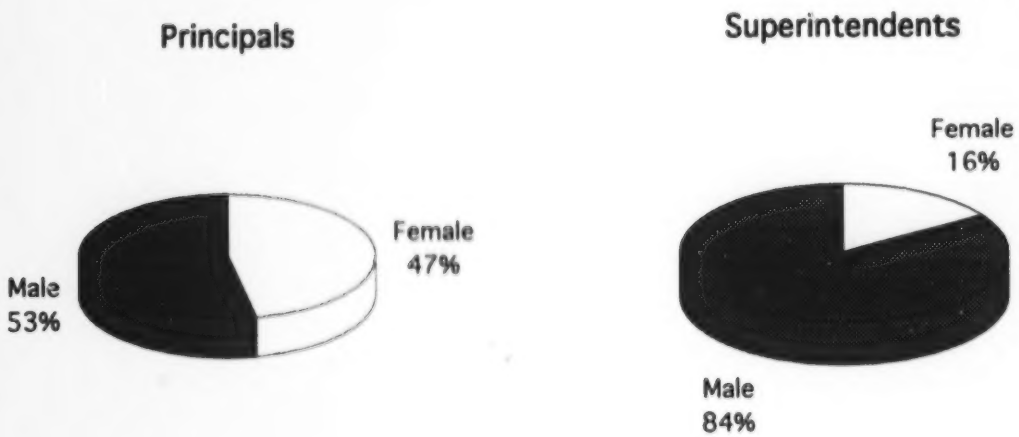
Principals	450
Superintendents	208



The survey was sent to all principals in the state of California who had been appointed to their present position in 1989 or later, in an attempt to survey as many beginning principals as possible. Fifty-three percent of the respondents are first time principals. Respondents' experience as a principal range from 1 year to more than 15 years with 70% being former assistant principals. Fifty-three percent are male and 47% are female *(see , Figure 2).*

Figure 2. Gender of Respondents

N=658	Principal	Superintendent
Female	212	33
Male	238	175



Seventy-nine percent are white, 1% Asian, 1% American Indian or Alaskan Native, 11% Hispanic, 6% Black and less than one percent Filipino *(see, Figure 3).* Sixty percent are elementary principals, 9% middle school, 7% junior high and 24% high school principals *(see , Figure 3 and 4)*

Figure 3. Principal Ethnicity

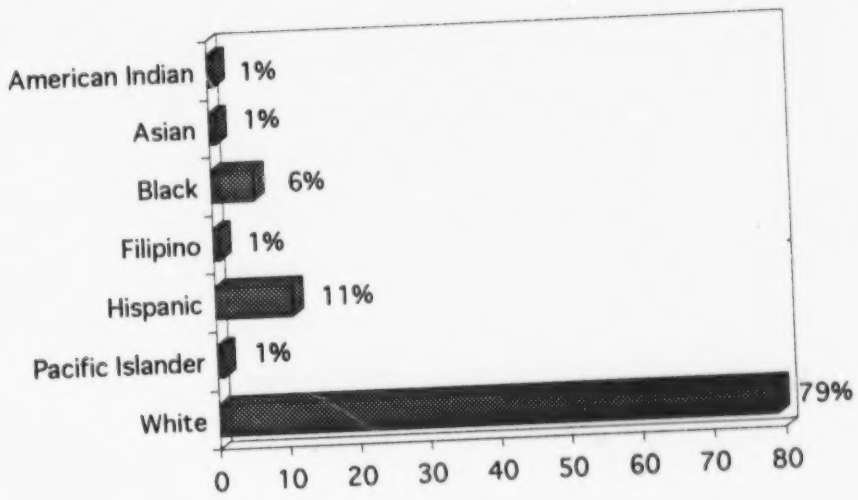
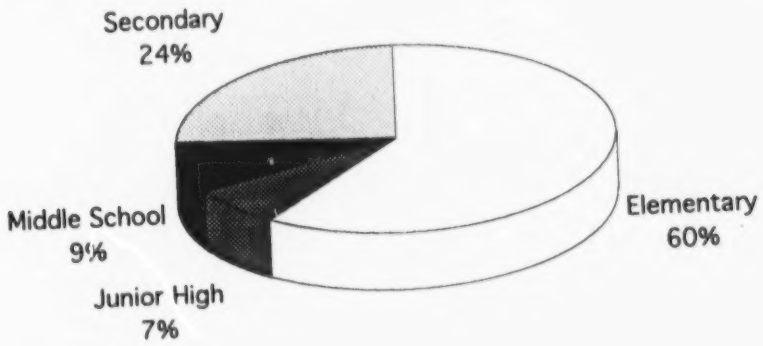


Figure 4. Classification of District Principals



Superintendents selected for the study were superintendents of school districts with a minimum student enrollment of 5,000. The size limitation was imposed to insure responses from superintendents who may be involved more frequently in the selection of principals. The superintendents experience ranged from one to five years to more than 26 years as a superintendent. Eighty-three percent are male and 17% female. Forty-nine percent of the respondents represent districts with a student enrollment between 5,000 and 20,000. Of the two hundred and eight respondents, seventy-four percent have been involved in hiring two or more principals during the last five years. Of the 1125 principals surveyed, 450 questionnaires were usable, producing a 40% return rate. Of the 435 superintendents, 208 of the surveys were returned and usable, yielding a 57% return.

Data Collection

All principals that participated in the study completed a 45 item questionnaire *(Appendix A)* which asked respondents for background data relating to their age, gender, years in education, present position as well as their assessment of the adequacy of their university-based certification program. The questionnaire also asked them to assess the importance of skills normally associated with the role of the principal on a 5 point Likert Scale. Each item was rated from Critical to Irrelevant. The items on this scale were derived from the work of Daresh & Playko, (1989) "which involved the use of the Delphi Technique to determine the nature of specific skills which were sought and valued by superintendents as they selected new principals for their school districts." The first eight items on this section of the questionnaire related to skills which traditionally are thought of as technical skills or "how to" skills. The second set of eight items related to socialization skills of becoming a principal, and the third set of eight items related to self-awareness skills.

The Superintendent Questionnaire *(Appendix B)* was similar to the principal questionnaire. This questionnaire included background data such as age, gender, principal and superintendent experience, size of district, etc. The survey also included an item eliciting superintendent's beliefs on the biggest challenges for beginning principals, as well as the superintendent's perception of how well-prepared aspiring principals are to meet these challenges. The third section of the questionnaire included the twenty-four critical skill items described in the principal questionnaire.

Results

Critical Skills.

Results indicate that there is strong agreement among and between principals and superintendents regarding skills that are critical for new principals to possess.

Principals, regardless of their years of experience as a principal, level of administrative position or gender, identified ten skills they believed to be of utmost importance. On a scale of 1-5 with 5 being Critical and 1 being Irrelevant, the principals rated the identified ten skills between a 4 and 5 *(See table 1)*. The skills are presented in rank order.

Superintendents were also in agreement with each other regarding what they believed the critical skills were for novice principals to possess. The superintendents identified the same ten skills as the principals did as falling somewhere between Very Important to Critical. In fact, the first seven were identical on the rating scale. Skills 8, 9 and 10 were the same but in different order. Like the principals, there does not appear to be any differentiating variables that impacted superintendents' beliefs. *(See Table 1). (Mean scores and ranking are found in Appendix C).*

TABLE 1

Top Ten Critical Skills Identified by Principals and Superintendents

	Skill	Ranking	
		Principals	Superintendents
1.	Having a vision along with an understanding of the steps needed to achieve relevant goals.	1	1
2.	Demonstrating a desire to make a significant difference in the lives of staff and students.	2	2
3.	Knowing how to evaluate staff (e.g.), procedures for the task, and also substance: What do standards really mean?).	3	3
4.	Understanding that change is ongoing, and that it results in a continually changing vision of the principalship.	4	4
5.	Being aware of one's biases, strengths, and weaknesses.	5	5
6.	Knowing how to facilitate/conduct group meetings (large and small).	6	6
7.	Portraying a sense of self-confidence on the job.	7	7
8.	Knowing how to assess job responsibilities in terms of "real role" of the principalship.	8	10
9.	Knowing how to encourage involvement by all parties in the educational community.	9	8
10.	Knowing where the ethical limits exist within the district or building and balancing that knowledge with one's own professional values.	10	9

(Mean scores and ranking are found in Appendix C).

The only significant differences between superintendents and principals occurred in the lower third of the rankings. Principals believe that skills relating to more "technical skills" (e.g. budgeting, scheduling, working with support staff) were more important to their success than did the superintendents. The principals also believe that understanding the impact of the principalship on relationships with family and others was more important than did the superintendents. But these were considered by both groups as only moderately important.

These differences in perceptions could be explained in two ways. First, the more technical skills are a part of the principal's everday work life more than a superintendent's and therefore become more important by their mere presence. Another way of explaining this may be that superintendents have the advantage of being able to see the "forest rather than the trees" and realize that regardless of how well the schools are managed, principals will not be effective if they do not establish strong working relationships with both external and internal constituents and if they cannot provide visonary leadership.

Of all 24 skills listed, all were considered Moderately Important to Critical. None were ranked as Less Important or Irrelevant by either of the groups. *(See Appendix C.)*

Administrator Preparation Program

Both superintendents and principals of California schools were asked in 1992 what elements would improve the current administrative training programs for principals. They were also asked if they felt the present programs were adequate.

Principal's Responses.

Fifty-one percent of the principals who responded to the survey felt that their training was average, 28% felt the training was very well done and 5% believed it was extremely well done. Sixteen percent of those queried rated their training as below average or poorly done.

The responses of administrators regarding suggestions for program improvement were divided into two categories—those administrators in their first principalship and those who were more experienced. The suggestions for improving the programs they attended are as follows in order of frequency. *(Table II and III).*

TABLE 2

Responses of Administrators in Their First Principalship on How to Improve Their Training

1. Provide more practical information on current issues and less theory.
2. Provide longer and more rigorous internships.
3. Provide training in conflict management.
4. Provide training in human relations.
5. Provide opportunity to shadow a principal.
6. Discuss negotiations issues more frequently.
7. Provide time management training.
8. Offer budget training.
9. Provide more information on politics of education.

TABLE 3

Responses of Experienced Principals Who Have Had at Least 6 years in the Principalship

1. Provide more practical information on current issues and less theory.
2. Provide longer and more rigorous internships.
3. Provide less emphasis on theory.
4. Provide more training in human relations.
5. Provide more information on budget.
6. Provide opportunities to shadow a principal.
7. Provide training in law and the education code.
8. Provide training in conflict resolution.
9. Provide training in politics of education

In comparing the two responses, it is interesting to note that both sets of principals felt that there should be more emphasis on current practical information and internships than is currently offered. It appeared from their comments that they felt that professors rely too much on classroom activities and textbook-oriented instruction. Each group of principals offered as many as 60 suggestions on how to improve the program, all of which related to their daily tasks on the job. Some of their specific suggestions included: more emphasis on knowing instructional methodologies, the process of evaluating staff and training in ethnic diversity and Limited English issues.

Superintendents' Responses.

Sixty-two percent of the superintendents responding rated principal training as above average. Eight percent felt that the training of their principals was extremely well done. Thirty percent felt the training was below average. In contrasting this response with that of the principals, it appears that more superintendents felt that the training was below average. The responses of superintendents on how they would change the program are divided into superintendents with 1-5 years experience and those with 6 or more years experience. *(Tables 4 and 5).*

TABLE 4

Responses of Novice Superintendents on How They Would Change the Principals' Training Program

1. Provide more practical information on current administration issues.
2. Provide longer and more rigorous internships.
3. Provide mentoring and shadowing experiences.
4. Provide instruction by practitioners.
5. Provide budget training.
6. Provide more training in staff evaluation.

TABLE 5

Responses of Experienced Superintendents on How They Would Change the Principals' Training Program

1. Provide more practical information on current administrative issues.
2. Provide more rigorous and extensive internships.
3. Provide instruction by practitioners.
4. Use case studies as an instructional approach.
5. Provide training in communication skills.
6. Provide more training in strategic planning.

Challenges for Beginning Principals

Superintendents were asked what they believed to be the three biggest challenges for beginning principals. Their responses fell into four major categories:

1. Interpersonal skills.
2. Academics/curriculum leadership.
3. Fiscal resources.
4. Management/leadership role.

Interpersonal Skills.

Superintendents believe that some of the biggest challenges principals will face in this category are:

1. Encouraging and managing parental involvement.
2. Dealing with a large variety of people.
3. Developing solid communication networks.
4. Building trust with their faculty and developing an effective team.

Academics/Curriculum Leadership.

Superintendents believed that principals need to accept academic accountability and to understand the needs of their students, provide leadership in instructional and curriculum matters and be able to evaluate instruction.

Fiscal Resources.

The essence of their comments related to "being able to do more with less."

Leadership/Management.

Superintendents comments in this area were numerous; the issues mentioned most often related to:

1. Being able to manage their time effectively.
2. Being able to stimulate and manage change.
3. Being able to handle the responsibilities of site-based management.
4. Developing and implementing an educational vision for their school.
5. Collaborative decision-making.
6. Long-range planning.

Discussion

Our survey results indicated that principals and superintendents in California agreed on critical skills for novice principals to possess. They believed that principals should know what they wanted to achieve or create (having vision), know how to achieve that vision, be sincerely committed to making a difference in the lives of those persons involved in the school, be confident of their leadership ability, know their own strengths, weaknesses and value systems and embrace and understand the need to change their definition of their role depending upon the circumstances. In addition, they must be willing and able to involve their many constituent groups (including members of the community) in the process of schooling. They must also be able to engage meaningfully in the evaluation of faculty.

Overlaying Daresh's taxonomy of skills (technical, socialization, self-awareness) *(See Appendix D.)* the majority of the skills the respondents deemed as critical were self-awareness skills—knowing who you are, what you believe in and what you can and cannot do well. This is followed by two socialization skills (ethical issues and involvement of all parties in the educational community) and two technical skills (evaluation of faculty and ability to conduct group meetings) all relating to effective interactions with people. These beliefs were similar to the beliefs held by the superintendents in the Daresh & Playko study (1992). None of the respondents in our study placed a high emphasis on technical skills as did the aspiring administrators in the Daresh study. Obviously, those within the administrative ranks saw the principal's role differently than those persons seeking to enter managerial ranks. One wonders if people seeking the principalship have a realistic understanding of the challenges and requirements of the position in today's environment?

Relating the study's findings to Katz and Kahn's (1978) taxonomies of skills for managers, another picture emerged. The more conceptual skills that were usually linked to high levels of management (executive managers, e.g. superintendents) were the skills California administrators believed to be important for beginning principals. Kowalski's (1992) study of desired skills for principals also suggested that principals needed to develop human relation skills and conceptual skills rather than focusing mainly on technical skills. Whether this was a change of perception on the part of administrators, or whether Katz and Kahn's theory did not adequately describe public education originally was difficult to conclude.

Regardless, relating the study's findings to skill taxonomy research, a new image of the principal emerges: no longer a technocrat laden with "how to" knowledge, but an executive with the creativity to envision a new world, the ability to engage others to sign on for the journey and together chart the course to unknown territories. Conceptual skills, self-awareness skills and people skills seem to be

more important than knowing the specific technical skills often deemed important for beginning principals to possess.

Professional Socialization.

During the socialization of principals in their pre-service period may be the best time to address these conflicting views. Merton (1968) defines "socialization" as the processes through which an individual acquires the knowledge, skills and dispositions needed to perform a social role effectively. Parkay, et. al. (1992) reports there are identifiable stages of professional socialization that principals experience: survival, control, stability, educational leadership and professional actualization. They further suggest that principals begin a new principalship at different stages of professional development and that a principal's eventual level of professional socialization is strongly indicated by the end of the first year. Our study suggested that practicing administrators now believe that skills critical to beginning principal are those described by Parkay as the professional development Stage 4 Educational Leadership and Stage 5 Professional Actualization. Parkay described these stages as the "the first stage at which a strong vision becomes important...the leader expects long term success for change strategies." In addition, "the Stage 5 leader energizes, coordinates, and brings out the best in subordinates, they become increasingly open to facilitating learning and growth—both for themselves and for others." Parkay further suggested that principals who have achieved a higher level of professional socialization take the "long view;" they are energized by their job and by their visions for the schools... Their actions are informed by a strong sense of what it means to be a principal." Administrators (both principals and superintendents) in our study ascribed that description to the beginning principalship. The data indicate that beginning principals must act as "visionary leaders" rather than be engaging in behaviors characterized by Parkay as survival, and control-oriented (Stages 1 and 2). If this is so, then principals who do not reach these later stages by the end of their first year may not be given extended opportunities to learn to lead. This put greater emphasis on the type of experiences and educational programs needed by pre-service principals. Assessment of a different nature will also be needed to ascertain the developmental level of graduates of educational administration programs. The luxury of becoming socialized on the job is no longer reality for beginning principals. Perhaps the principalship has now evolved into an executive position rather than an entry level managerial role. If so, then what role is or should be the "entry level" administrative position? What implications does this have for graduate programs and professional development programs?

Preparation Programs.

When principals and superintendents were asked about their beliefs regarding the adequacy of preparation programs, their enthusiasm was not overwhelming. The

results indicated that universities which were involved in preparing persons for the role of the principal needed to engage in some program evaluation and revamping. In turbulent times such as exist today, we need persons who believe they have the skills and knowledge-base necessary to lead schools. On the job training time is not always available. When asked what suggestion do principals have for the improvement of their preparation programs, the majority felt that a "more meaningful" or "full-time" internship be offered. In essence, respondents felt that they needed time to watch, question and practice the skills and behaviors exhibited by effective principals. Many suggested a student teaching type model be developed and required. The general tone of the respondents comments conveyed a message that their class work, although interesting and important, did not adequately address the reality they encountered on accepting the position of principal. They wanted more time to socialize with practitioners. This need felt by beginning principals, as well as more experienced ones, emphasized the necessity of revamping pre-service programs. Greater links between university personnel and school-based personnel are critical for more realistic understanding of the world of the principal. Collaborative programs between school districts and universities are required.

Biggest Challenges.

In general superintendents believe that principals will find their biggest challenge in bringing together a wide variety of people, both internal and external to the school, to establish a vision related to the needs of the students and develop strategy and plans to achieve that vision, while having less financial resources available to get the job done. As one superintendent stated: "The biggest challenges for beginning principals are: working to change mature, experienced staff attitudes and understanding of teaching strategies for a diverse group of students; working with restricted resources; and working through simultaneous and multiple pressure, issues and challenges."

Implications

Our research suggested that a new role for the principal is beginning to emerge. One which demands a creative, enthusiastic, uniting, collaborative approach to leadership. When superintendents suggested that one of the greatest challenges for beginning principals lies in fiscal management (not the typical budget building and management) but creatively doing "more with less" while making everyone (community, staff and students) happy, satisfied and committed to meeting the challenges of declining resources, one realized the role was indeed complex. Perhaps these perceptions are a result of the most recent organizational redesign of schools, that of site-based management. The "tried and true" managerial blueprints of yesterday, representing a different organizational design, are no longer relevant.

The results also suggested that administrators at various levels in the system have similar perceptions of the role. A united belief system between superior and subordinate as to "what it takes to get the job done," provided needed support for those persons on the "firing line."

The challenge for universities is to develop programs that reflect the emerging paradigm shift. Greater emphasis on interpersonal skills, psychology, adult learning, philosophy, creativity and collaborative decision making may need to dominate the curriculum. Immersion of students in the world of school leadership may be the answer—following the medical school or the student teaching model. Part-time, after work, extended time programs may be obsolete. As Edwards Deming stated "Obsolescence is not necessarily planned. It just happens." (Deming, 1986). Full-time, intensive socializing and academic training programs are perhaps more appropriate to helping perspective principals understand the realities of the position and to give them time to develop the skills, knowledge-base and confidence necessary for success as a beginning principal.

Professors will need to spend time reacquainting themselves with realities of reformed or restructured schools. Collaborative efforts will need to be developed between schools and universities. Universities must honor the importance of practice and research linked to practical issues as well as honor collaborative research efforts. Districts need to acknowledge the resources and knowledge-base available through associations with the university. Time demands require people fully prepared to undertake the role of the principal and dwindling resources negate the ability for many school districts to provide the in-depth training needed to "train their own."

In conclusion, this research shed some light on the emerging role of the principal, at least in California. It suggested that the beliefs of principals, both novice and experienced, and superintendents are congruent as to what it takes to be a successful principal—an important implication.

Peter Senge's description of a leader (The Fifth Discipline) best fits the "new" principal image which emerged from this study.

> "Rather what distinguishes them [leaders] is the clarity and persuasiveness of their ideas, the depth of their commitment, and their openness to continually learning more. The ability of such people to be natural leaders...is a lifetime of effort—effort to develop conceptual communication skills, to reflect on personal values and to align personal behavior with values, to learn how to listen and to appreciate others and others' ideas. In the absence of such efforts, personal charisma is style without substance."

The study also suggests that those institutions involved in preparing people for this position are faced with a challenge similar to school districts—that of reforming or restructuring to meet the new leadership challenges.

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APPENDIX A

Principal's Survey of Critical Skills for Beginning Principals

APPENDIX A

CALIFORNIA PRINCIPALS

Please fill in the information below by placing an X on the appropriate line. Please do not record your name. All responses will be kept strictly confidential and the results will be reported in terms of the entire population only. Please do not omit any items.

1. Gender: (1)_____Male; (2)_____Female.

2. Current Age: (1)_____21-30; (2)_____31-40; (3)_____41-50; (4)_____51-60.

3. Ethnicity: (1)_____American Indian or Alaskan Native: (2)_____Asian; (3) _____Pacific Islander; (4)_____Filipino; (5)_____Hispanic; (6)_____Black, not Hispanic; (7)_____White, not Hispanic.

4. Is this your first principalship? (1)_____Yes; (2)_____No.

5. If you answered "No" to question #4, how many years in total have you been a principal? (1)_____Less than 5; (2)_____5-10 years; (3)_____11-15 years; (4)_____More than 15 years.

6. Your age when you were appointed to your first principal ship: (1)_____21-30; (2)_____31-40; (4)_____51-60.

7. Classification of your current school: (1)_____Elementary; (2)_____Middle; (3)_____Junior High; (4)_____Private.

8. Classification of your current district: (1)_____Elementary; (2)_____Secondary; (3)_____Unified; (4)_____Private.

9. Degrees (Please circle): (1) BA/BS: Major_____; (2) MA/MS: Major_____; (3) Ph.D./Ed.D: Major _____.

10. Experience (Your last position prior to current principalship):_____.

11. Size of current district: (1)_____0-999; (2)_____1,000-4,999; (3)_____5,000-9,999; (4)_____10,000-19,999; (5)_____20,000-49,999; (6)_____Above 50,000.

12. Number of years in each position: (Please mark with X).

	NONE	1-5	5-10	10 +
Teacher (K-6)	(1)_____	(2)_____	(3)_____	(4)_____
Teacher (7-12)	(5)_____	(6)_____	(7)_____	(8)_____
Asst. Principal (K-6)	(9)_____	(10)_____	(11)_____	(12)_____
Asst. Principal (7-12)	(13)_____	(14)_____	(15)_____	(16)_____
Dean or Counselor (7-12)	(17)_____	(18)_____	(19)_____	(20)_____
Principal (K-6)	(21)_____	(22)_____	(23)_____	(24)_____
Principal (7-12)	(25)_____	(26)_____	(27)_____	(28)_____

13. How well do you believe your administrative training and credentialing program prepared you for your first principalship?

(1)_____Poorly; (2)_____Below Average; (3)_____Average; (4)_____Very Well; (5)_____Extremely Well.

14. What adjustments would you recommend be made in your administrative certification program to better prepare beginning principals?

(1)_____

(2)_____

(3)_____

15. At what type of educational institutional did you obtain your administrative training?

(1)_____California University System; (2)_____California State System; (3)_____ Private College/University (in state); (4)_____Public/Private University (out-of-state); (5) Name of institution:_____

16. How comfortable do you feel consulting with your superintendent when you need help or advice?

(1)_____Not at all comfortable; (2)_____Fairly comfortable; (3)_____Very comfortable.

17. How comfortable do you feel consulting with other principals in your district when you need help or advice?

(1)_____Not at all comfortable; (2)_____Fairly comfortable; (3)_____Very comfortable.

18. What is the title of the individual who evaluates your performance as a principal? (1)_____ Superintendent; (2)_____Regional/Area Superintendent; (3)_____Central Office Administrator; (4)_____Teaching Staff; (5)_____Other_____(Title).

19. Does your school have an active site-based council? (1)_____Yes; (2)_____No.

20. The following 24 skills have been identified by superintendents in another state as critical for new principals to possess. Using the scale below, please rate each item based on how important you feel it is for a new principal to possess the specific quality listed.

CRITICAL	VERY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	LESS IMPORTANT	IRRELEVANT
5	4	3	2	1

_____ 1. Knowing how to evaluate staff (e.g., procedures for the task, and also substance: What do standards really mean?).

_____ 2. Knowing how to facilitate/conduct group meetings (large and small).

_____ 3. Knowing how to design and implement a data-based improvement process, including goal-setting and evaluating.

_____ 4. Knowing how to develop and monitor a building budget.

_____ 5. Knowing how to organize and conduct parent-teacher-student conferences.

_____ 6. Knowing how to establish a scheduling program for students and staff (master schedule).

_____ 7. Awareness of the state code and other issues associated with school law.

_____ 8. Knowing how to manage food service, custodial, and secretarial staff.

_____ 9. Establishing a positive and cooperative relationship with other administrators in the district.

_____10. Knowing how to delineate employee roles in a school setting.

_____11. Knowing how to relate to school board members and central office personnel.

_____12. Knowing where the ethical limits exist within the district or building and balancing that knowledge with one's own professional values.

_____13. Understanding how the principalship changes one's family and other personal relationships.

_____14. Developing interpersonal networking skills that may be used with individuals inside and outside the school system.

_____15. Knowing how to encourage involvement by all parties in the educational community.

_____16. Knowing how to develop positive relationship with other organizational power and authority.

_____17. Demonstrating an awareness of what it means to possess organizational power and authority.

_____18. Demonstrating an awareness of why one was selected for a leadership position in the first place.

_____19. Portraying a sense of self-confidence on the job.

_____20. Having a vision along with an understanding of the steps needed to achieve relevant goals.

_____21. Demonstrating a desire to make a significant difference in the lives of staff and students.

_____22. Knowing where the ethical limits exist within the district or building and balancing that knowledge with one's own professional values.

_____23. Understanding that change is ongoing, and that it results in a continually changing vision of the principalship.

_____24. Knowing how to assess job responsibilities in terms of the "real role of the principalship."

_____25. Other—please list_____

_____.

APPENDIX B

Superintendents Survey of Critical Skills
for Beginning Principals

APPENDIX B

CALIFORNIA SUPERINTENDENTS

Please fill in the information below by placing an X on the appropriate line. Please do not record your name. All responses will be kept strictly confidential and the results will be reported in terms of the entire population only. Please do not omit any items.

1. Size of district: (1)_____0-999; (2)_____1,000-4,999; (3)_____5,000-9,999; (4)_____10,000-19; (5)_____20,000-49.999; (6)_____Above 50,000.

2. Classification of district: (1)_____Elementary; (2)_____Secondary; (3)_____Unified; (4)_____Private.

3. Gender: (1)_____Male; (2)_____Female.

4. Ethnicity: (1)_____ _American Indian or Alaskan Native; (2)_____Asian; (3) _____Pacific Islander; (4)_____Filipino; (5)_____Hispanic; (6)_____Black, not Hispanic; (7)_____White, not Hispanic.

5. Length of time as a superintendent: (1)_____1-5 years; (2)_____6-10 years; (3)_____ 11-15 years; (4)_____16-20 years; (5)_____21-25 years; (6)_____26 years or more.

6. Principalship Experience: If "Yes," what level? (1)_____Elementary; (2)_____Middle: (3)_____Junior High; (4)_____Senior High.

7. How many principalships have you filled in the last five years? (1)_____0-1; (2)_____2-3; (3)_____4-5; (4)_____More than 5.

8. What do you think are the three biggest challenges for beginning principals?

   1 . _____

   2 . _____

   3 . _____

9. How well do you think the principals, whom you have hired in the last five years, have been prepared by their administrative credentialing program to successfully meet these challenges?

   (1)_____Poorly; (2)_____Below Average; (3)_____Above Average; (4)_____Extremely Well.

10. Do you have any suggestions for improvement of university-based administrative credentialing programs *(use back of survey if needed).*

_____

_____

_____

11. The following 24 skills have been identified by superintendents in another state as critical for new principals to possess. Using the scale below, please rate each item based on how important <u>you</u> feel it is for a <u>new</u> principal to possess the specific quality listed.

CRITICAL	VERY IMPORTANT	MODERATELY IMPORTANT	LESS IMPORTANT	IRRELEVANT
5	4	3	2	1

_____ 1. Knowing how to evaluate staff (e.g., procedures for the task, and also substance: What do standards really mean?).

_____ 2. Knowing how to facilitate/conduct group meetings (large and small).

_____ 3. Knowing how to design and implement a data-based improvement process, including goal-setting and evaluating.

_____ 4. Knowing how to develop and monitor a building budget.

_____ 5. Knowing how to organize and conduct parent-teacher-student conferences.

_____ 6. Knowing how to establish a scheduling program for students and staff (master schedule).

_____ 7. Awareness of the state code and other issues associated with school law.

_____ 8. Knowing how to manage food service, custodial, and secretarial staff.

_____ 9. Establishing a positive and cooperative relationship with other administrators in the district.

_____10. Knowing how to delineate employee roles in a school setting.

_____11. Knowing how to relate to school board members and central office personnel.

_____12. Knowing where the ethical limits exist within the district or building and balancing that knowledge with one's own professional values.

_____13. Understanding how the principalship changes one's family and other personal relationships.

_____14. Developing interpersonal networking skills that may be used with individuals inside and outside the school system.

_____15. Knowing how to encourage involvement by all parties in the educational community.

_____16. Knowing how to develop positive relationships with other organizations and agencies located in the school's surrounding community.

_____17. Demonstrating an awareness of what it means to possess organizational power and authority.

_____18. Demonstrating and awareness of why one was selected for a leadership position in the first place.

_____19. Portraying a sense of self-confidence on the job.

_____20. Having a vision along with an understanding of the steps needed to achieve relevant goals.

_____21. Demonstrating a desire to make a significant difference in the lives of staff and students.

_____22. Being aware of one's biases, strengths, and weaknesses.

_____23. Understanding that change is ongoing, and that it results in a continually changing vision of the principalship.

_____24. Knowing how to assess job responsibilities in terms of the "real role" of the principalship.

_____25. Other—please list_____

_____.

APPENDIX C

Mean Scores and Ranking of Critical Skills Survey Items

APPENDIX C

MEAN SCORES AND RANKINGS OF CRITICAL SKILLS SURVEY ITEMS

Mean scores and ranking of each item of the **"Critical Skills Survey"** according to two groups: Principals and Superintendents.

	PRINCIPALS		SUPERINTENDENTS	
Survey Item	Mean	Ranking	Mean	Ranking
1	4.51	3	4.56	3
2	4.34	6	4.29	6
3	3.94	12	3.81	14
4	3.96	11	3.82	13
5	3.90	13	3.87	11
6	3.72	21	3.49	21
7	3.82	16	3.41	22
8	3.48	23	3.13	24
9	3.76	20	3.76	16
10	3.81	17	3.84	12
11	3.83	15	3.69	19
12	4.04	10	4.12	9
13	3.80	18	3.61	20
14	3.90	14	3.80	15
15	4.16	9	4.20	8
16	3.79	19	3.74	17
17	3.69	22	3.71	18
18	3.39	24	3.40	23
19	4.27	7	4.22	7
20	4.69	1	4.70	1
21	4.61	2	4.60	2
22	4.41	5	4.33	5
23	4.44	4	4.39	4
24	4.22	8	4.05	10

APPENDIX D

Daresh Taxonomy of Skills

APPENDIX D

DARESH TAXONOMY OF SKILLS

AREA I: Technical Skills

Survey No.	Item
1	How to evaluate staff (i.e. procedures for the task, and also the substance).
2	How to facilitate group meetings.
3	How to design and implement a data-based improvement process.
4	How to develop and monitor a building budget.
5	How to organize and conduct parent-student-teacher conferences.
6	How to establish a scheduling program for students and staff.
7	Awareness of issues related to local school law.
8	How to manage food service, custodial, and secretarial staff.

AREA II: Socialization

9	Establishing a positive and cooperative relationship with other district administrators.
10	How to determine who is what in a school setting.
11	Knowing how to relate to board members and central office personnel.
12	Knowing where the limits exist within the district or building, and balancing that with one's own professional values.
13	Understanding how the principalship changes family and other relationships.
14	Developing interpersonal networking skills that may be used with individuals inside and outside the system.
15	Ability to encourage involvement by all parties in the educational community.
16	How to develop positive relationships with other organizations and agencies located in the school's surrounding community.

AREA III: Self Awareness

17	Demonstrating an awareness of what it means to possess organizational power and authority.
18	Demonstrating an awareness of why one was selected for a leadership position in the first place.
19	Portraying a sense of self-confidence on the job.
20	Having a vision along with an understanding needed to achieve relevant goals.
21	Demonstrating a desire to make a significant difference in the lives of staff and students.
22	Being aware of one's biases, strengths, and weaknesses.
23	Understanding and seeing that change is ongoing, and that it results in a continually changing vision of the principalship.
24	How to assess job responsibilities in terms of the "real role" of the principalship.